

Protect yourself and others from influenza. Remember to...

Clean, Cover & Contain



Clean
your hands



Cover
your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the crook of your arm



Contain
your illness - stay home and rest

Newfoundland
Labrador

Health and Community Services

For more information, please contact...

Newfoundland
Labrador

Health and Community Services

www.gov.nl.ca/health

Newfoundland & Labrador
HealthLine

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1-888-709-2929



Public Health
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www.publichealth.gc.ca

Information for Parents and Guardians

H1N1 Influenza



Newfoundland
Labrador

Education

What is H1N1 influenza?

H1N1 influenza is a respiratory illness that has symptoms similar to those of seasonal flu.

The virus is spread in the same manner as seasonal flu.

Coughs and sneezes release germs into the air that can be breathed in by others. H1N1 influenza is transmitted from person to person when germs enter the nose or throat.

Coughing and sneezing can also release germs that will remain on hard surfaces like counters, phones, keyboards, remote controls and doorknobs. They can then be transferred to the hands and transmitted to the respiratory system when a person touches his or her mouth or nose.

How concerned should I be?

There is a higher sense of awareness with respect to the H1N1 influenza as the World Health Organization has declared it a pandemic influenza virus. Declaring it a pandemic has to do with the spread of the disease and NOT the severity of the illness.

In most cases, symptoms of the virus are relatively mild. The majority of people infected have made a full recovery within a week. However, it is important to take the steps outlined in this brochure to decrease the chances of catching or passing on H1N1 influenza.

Will a school be closed if a case of H1N1 influenza is confirmed in the school?

No. The Public Health Agency of Canada is not recommending the closure of schools. It recommends that schools continue to promote basic infection control, such as frequent hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and asking those who feel ill to stay home.

How can I help ensure my child's health at school?

CLEAN

Teach your child to wash his or her hands often with soap and water. You can set the example by doing this yourself.

Teach your child NOT to share personal items like drinks, food or unwashed utensils.

COVER

Teach your child to cover his or her mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Without a tissue, cough or sneeze into the elbow or shoulder, not into hands.

Consider getting your family vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 influenza.

CONTAIN

The signs and symptoms of the flu include fever, fatigue, lack of appetite, coughing and sore throat. Some people with H1N1 Influenza have also reported vomiting and diarrhea.

Children who become ill with influenza-like symptoms should stay at home until they are symptom free, are feeling well, and able to fully participate in all normal day to day school activities.

Yes. The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends the use of hand sanitizers only as a supplement to hand washing; it is not a replacement for hand washing. Also, to be effective it must have at least 60% alcohol content. Parents may provide personal size hand sanitizers to their children.

What if my child is showing flu-like symptoms?

Is hand washing necessary if my child uses a hand sanitizer?

Will there be a vaccine against H1N1 influenza?

Yes. A vaccine will be available in the fall. More information will be communicated on this as it becomes available.

Will I be notified if there is a confirmed case or cases of H1N1 in a school?

No. Health officials advise that the H1N1 influenza virus is community-based and circulates in the same manner as seasonal influenza. It is not localized to individual schools and therefore notifying parents will not assist in containing or preventing the spread of the virus. Basic infection control must be practiced in all schools regardless of the identification of a confirmed case of the virus. Notification could create a false sense of security in schools where a case has not been confirmed. The situation will be continuously monitored and if there are changes appropriate action will be taken.

What is being done by the Department of Education to help reduce the spread of H1N1 influenza?

The Department of Education has established a committee to monitor the conditions related to H1N1 influenza, and has provided the following resources to school administrators:

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) to allow principals, teachers and staff to become knowledgeable about the topic and to assist them in answering questions from students and parents;
- an information brochure to be distributed to parents;
- health information posters to be placed throughout schools;
- suggested web-based resources, including videos; and
- locked hand sanitizers to be placed in supervised areas.

To view our online resources go to: www.gov.nl.ca/edu